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THE UNPRINCIPLED WAR:  
LOOKING AT THE WAR ON DRUGS

by

John Louis Ahart  
Captain USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of National Security Decision Making.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: John Louis Ahart

18 June 1993

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My intent is to show that, even though on numerous "fronts" we are winning the drug war, there is no united front. Applying the principles of war and putting their tenets into practice may well be the catalyst to unite all players into a synergistic war machine to win America back from the drug cartels.

The purpose of the paper is to apply the principles of war into the various factors and agencies involved in the drug war to identify the numerous problems present, not only in the military, but also the national, political, and international diplomatic arenas.

The premise is that the "principles of war" have served the military well in numerous scenarios including War World II and Desert Storm and the principles should apply to the drug war as well.

My conclusion is that the "principles of war" are applicable to the drug war and should be considered even though some problems associated with their implementation may appear on the surface to be insurmountable.

## ABSTRACT

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The threat has been identified. We have anywhere from 37 to 154 agencies involved in fighting the threat. The money, material and manpower is involved, so why do I call the drug war "unprincipled"? It is the adage of doing things smarter. The people involved in the fight certainly have principles and integrity but unfortunately not a lot of cohesion.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AID	-	Agency for International Development
C3	-	Commander and Control Communications
CINCLANT	-	U.S. Commander in Chief, Atlantic
DEA	-	Drug Enforcement Administration
DOD	-	Department of Defense
DOJ	-	Department of Justice
DOS	-	Department of State
EAI	-	Enterprise for the Americas Initiative
FBI	-	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GRP	-	Guardia Republicana del Peru
INS	-	Immigration and Naturalization Service
JCS	-	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JTF	-	Joint Task Force
LEA	-	Law Enforcement Agency
MTT	-	Mobile Training Team
NDCP	-	National Drug Control Program
NSDD	-	National Security Decision Directive
ONDCP	-	Office of the National Drug Control Policy
OTA	-	Office of Technology Assessment
PIP	-	Policia de Investigaciones del Peru
ROE	-	Rules of Engagement
SOUTHCOM	-	U.S. Commander in Chief, Southern Command
UMOPR	-	Unidad Movid de Patrullaje Rural

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Drug war - reality or rhetoric? Drugs from Latin America kill an estimated 10,000 Americans a year; this equates to the number of deaths at the height of the Vietnam War. If this is not enough to justify our being involved in a drug war, then add the statistic of 300,000 drug-damaged babies born in the United States each year, the immeasurable number of drug related crimes and the astronomical financial costs of maintaining our judicial system's courts and prisons. We are in a war and it is time to get organized and make the efforts in fighting the drug war, become a deterrent and not a desuetude of the hopes and dreams of reducing the illegal drugs to an acceptable level.

To me the drug war is very real and I submit that parts of our strategies to fight drugs are working, even though we have a long ways to go. As the saying goes ... "Rome was not built in a day," and the drug war shall not be won in the near term.

What are some of the reasons why I feel we are entangled in a drug war? Just as the government of Kuwait asked for our assistance in 1990 to help regain their country, so did the government of Colombia ask our assistance in helping them fight the narcotraffickers. In 1989 Colombia had three political candidates assassinated, one of them was a presidential candidate. We had been involved in the narcotrafficking problem before Colombia's formal request and had been working on President Reagan's "five pillars" which consisted of eradication, interdiction, law enforcement, treatment and education. But, the formal request from Colombia led President Bush to issue Executive Order 506A which allocated \$68 million in equipment and training for 1990 and another \$73 million in 1991. The equipment consisted of riverine boats, helicopters, ammunition and clothing and in 1990, around 25% of the total was provided in training. Two important aspects of this transaction was that no actual monies exchanged hands and as an Executive Order the President did not need to get Congressional approval; he simply had to inform Congress of his actions.

So with all of this, are we in a drug war? The term war is not formally defined in U.S. law. However, its usage in the Constitution as well as title 10 and title 50 of the United States Code (USC) makes it clear that, in the specific sense, war is the state of hostilities that exists between or among belligerent nations, a state that the United States enters into only by formal declaration or authority of Congress, which possesses the sole constitutional power to do so.<sup>1</sup> It is normally entered into when there is considered to be a clear and present danger to the vital national interests of the United States. I therefore submit that, even though Congress has not formally declared the fight against the drug trade a war, President Bush declared it a "war against drugs", the clear and present danger to the vital interests of this nation from the narcotraffickers is well documented and in agreement with the National Security Strategy, and Congress has "informally" sanctioned the drug war.

Why is narcotrafficking a clear and present danger that needs to be countered through a "war effort?" Trafficking and consumption of illicit narcotics generate national security problems at home and abroad. Considering the enormous sums of money involved and the sophistication of the larger trafficking operations, efforts by drug cartels to either buy the support of government officials, or intimidate them must be expected.<sup>2</sup>

A threat is considered when someone has the capability to harm you and the intent to do so. Recognizing the narcotrafficker's capabilities and intent, President Reagan signed NSDD 221 declaring the international drug trade a threat to national security. President Bush affirmed this condition and the U.S. Congress concurred and financed the Administration's "war on drugs".<sup>3</sup>

If the present counternarcotics efforts being expended by the United States through its various agencies are in fact a "war on drugs", then we need to look at fighting it as a war. Throughout most of this century the U.S. Army has been fighting its campaigns utilizing the "principles of war." If these principles worked for the military in World War II and most recently in Desert Storm, they may also prove effective in the drug war.



The intent of this paper is to look at the application of the "principles of war" to the drug war and see the present problems associated with not having them applied and the possible strengths derived from their implementation. Even though the "principles of war" are intended for military use, their tenets are certainly applicable to the overall efforts by all agencies involved.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR

The U.S. Army published its first discussion of principles of war in a 1921 Army training regulation. These principles were taken from the work of British Major General J.F.C. Fuller, who developed a set of principles of war during World War I to serve as guides for his own army. In the ensuing years, the original principles of war adopted by our Army have been slightly revised, but they have essentially stood the test of analysis, experimentation, and practice. Today the JCS recognizes the principles of war to be: Objective, Offensive, Mass, Economy of Force, Maneuver, Unity of Command, Security, Surprise, and Simplicity.

Addressing each of these principles, the intent is to show not only the problems being encountered but also possible ways to apply the principles of war to enhance our present efforts.

### OBJECTIVE

Objective is defined as a need to direct every military operation towards a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective. The major problem in the drug war is the multitude of objectives present which do not necessarily show any clearly coordinated defined, decisive or attainable objective.

Just looking at the three main strategies, one can see that even though the theme of "drugs" is in each, their individual objectives may not be attainable.

The National Security Strategy states that the United States must ensure its security as a free and independent nation, and the protection of its fundamental values, institutions, and people. ... The flow of illicit narcotics into the United States undermines our national security in many ways. Therefore, "our principal strategic goal is to identify, disrupt, dismantle ... destroy ... organizations that produce drugs ..."<sup>4</sup> National security strategy flows from a broad concept regarding the world or regional order that best favors long term national interests.

The National Drug Control Strategy states that control resources "...fall into three major categories: those needed for demand reduction activities, those for domestic law enforcement programs, and those devoted to U.S. border control and international initiatives.<sup>5</sup> It does not provide a decisive objective for controlling the three areas.

The National Military Strategy states as part of its objectives "The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure. . . . A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights and democratic institutions flourish. ... the strategy hopes to accomplish these objectives by helping to ... aid in combatting threats to democratic institutions from aggression, coercion, insurgencies, and illicit drug trafficking.<sup>6</sup>

Each strategy has its own objective(s) which include combatting the illicit drug trade and they are all intrinsically connected. For example, the military strategy is the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy (National Security Strategy) in this case through the implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy. The problem is the focus towards meeting the national objective.

The following are some examples of just major players whose objectives may differ and consequently as we'll discuss later affect the principle of unity of command.

The Office of the National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), under the new "drug czar" Lee P. Brown, is the lead federal organization charged with pulling all of the parts together to ensure a coherent federal effort. The ONDCP, as a policymaking office is concerned with all aspects of the nation's counterdrug effort, including policies relating to interdiction (which DoD has the lead role); but it is not normally involved in day-to-day counterdrug operations.<sup>7</sup>

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is the federal agency devoted by its charter to day-to-day enforcement operations against drug trafficking. In essence, the DEA is the federal police force

whose efforts are directly solely at illegal drugs. DEA agents have powers of arrest, search, and seizure.<sup>8</sup> The DEAs efforts are both domestic and foreign, and DEA personnel may be assigned to "a particular United States mission abroad".<sup>9</sup> The DEA is the lead agency for the worldwide collection of drug intelligence information and for maintaining this intelligence database. It appears at times that the DEA objective is counterproductive to other agencies' efforts.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) exercises jurisdiction over all violations of U.S. law. In 1982, the attorney general directed the FBI to exercise concurrent jurisdiction with DEA for the overall drug enforcement effort. The FBI's stated focus (objective) in this responsibility is toward the drug-related violations of such laws as the Continuing Criminal Enterprise (CCE) statutes and Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) law. As the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) has noted, there appear to be "some degree of conflict, overlapping responsibilities, and confusion about jurisdiction between the FBI and DEA".<sup>10</sup>

The U.S. Coast Guard has been designated as the lead agency for maritime drug interdiction and a joint lead agency (with U.S. Customs) for air interdiction. "The Coast Guard is both a military (during wartime) and a law enforcement agency. In its LEA role the Coast Guard exercises jurisdiction over all violations of U.S. law on the high seas and upon the navigable waters of the United States".<sup>11</sup> Its broad authority to inspect vessels and to regulate maritime commerce has proven very useful in counternarcotics operations, especially in assisting DoD assets who do not have arrest authority.

On land, the U.S. Customs Service has been designated as the lead agency for interdiction; it is supported in this role by the Immigration and Neutralization Service (INS). As noted earlier in connection with the responsibilities of the Coast Guard, Customs is a joint lead agency for air interdiction, a role it emphasizes. Customs also supports the Coast Guard in maritime interdiction.<sup>12</sup> The Customs Service may "at anytime go on board of any vessel or vehicle at any place" - giving it broad powers in drug interdiction.<sup>13</sup> As you can see, DoD, Coast Guard and the Customs Service all have

lead responsibility for the air and maritime interdiction efforts.

The U.S. Border Patrol of the Immigration and Naturalization Service intercepts drugs along the border in the course of its efforts to enforce laws relating to the admission, exclusion, and expulsion of aliens. Both DEA and Customs have formally provided additional authority to Border Patrol agents to enable them to interdict drug traffick and enforce related laws. As part of their normal duties, Border Patrol agents can conduct searches at the border even without suspicion of criminal activity.<sup>14</sup> With all the inter-agency interaction with the Border Patrol it must be difficult for them to determine just what their objective is.

I have purposely avoided a more explicit delineation or diagram of the interlocking jurisdictions and authorities of the above organizations because their interrelationships are extremely complicated and quite often vary by case. Any single specific depiction would necessarily be subjected to a large number of caveats and could be misleading.<sup>15</sup> Needless to say, the direction of the drug war operation towards a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective appears to be foggy at best.

Now that the agency relationships look like a Chinese checkers board, lets add an international example to increase the confusion.

Peru's five agencies of control are the Guardia Civil (the regular police); the Guardia Republicana del Peru (GRP), or the National Guard; the Policia de Investigaciones del Peru (PiP), the Peruvian equivalent to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Unidad Movil de Patrullaje Rural (UMOPR), the agency charged exclusively with controlling the coca trade in the mountainous forests; and the Sinchis, a special antsubversive unit that combats the Maoist Shining Path guerrillas.<sup>16</sup>

The five enforcement agencies, each of which has a different objective for particular aspects of the broad problem (narcotrafficking), do not agree on their goals.<sup>17</sup> This lack of a coordinated objective among the various agencies fighting the drug war in the rest of the Andean Ridge nations has also been documented.

Add to this confusion the objectives of the various countries involved and it becomes even more convoluted.

One of the United States' objectives is to curtail the flow of illegal drugs northward.

Colombia's primary objective is not to stem the narcotics trade but to contain the violence that the large-scale drug cartels are capable of unleashing against the Colombian government and people. As an example, on 15 April 1993, a powerful car bomb ripped apart a busy Bogota shopping center, killing at least 15 people and wounding more than 100. The government blamed the fugitive drug trafficker Pablo Escobar Gaviria for the attack.<sup>18</sup>

In Peru and Bolivia the main goal is to find an economically viable alternative for the many coca-growing peasants. Peru is also being heavily concerned with the relationship between the insurgent group Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) and the narcotraffickers who are financially backing the group.

Looking at the diversity of objectives both national and international it becomes difficult not to see why we are experiencing problems getting our "arms around the drug war objective" because it doesn't exist. Is everything hopeless? No, there are many good ideas and objectives being implemented, we just need to get all concerned agencies headed in the same direction. How you ask?! The U.S. Department of State (DOS) acts as lead agency for coordinating the U.S. role in international drug control efforts. Working closely with the DEA, the Agency for International Development (AID), the Department of Defense (DoD) and other pertinent agencies, DOS should be the one to coordinate the efforts to attain international objectives for reducing the drug supply. The Department of Defense, Coast Guard, Customs, FBI, DEA and other applicable agencies should coordinate their efforts to attain international objectives for reducing the flow of drugs through interdiction efforts. Internal to the United States, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) along with the Department of Education and Health, as well as numerous agencies mentioned earlier, should coordinate their efforts to attain national objectives by providing drug education and rehabilitation programs and

assisting in reducing the overloaded courts/prison systems.

This certainly is a broad brush view that leaves more unanswered than answered. But, the intent was to show the numerous problems present when someone tries to establish a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.

Are we a rudderless ship because of this? Again the answer is no. The President's National Security Strategy provides two broad objectives:<sup>19</sup>

- Reduction of the flow of illegal drugs into the United States
- Aid to [other nations] in combatting threats to domestic institutions from ... illicit drug trafficking.

Additional U.S. strategic objectives in controlling international drug trafficking include:<sup>20</sup>

- Disruption and dismantlement of drug trafficking organizations;
- Reducing cocaine supply by providing law enforcement, military, and economic assistance to Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia to isolate their major coca-producing regions; blocking delivery of chemicals used in cocaine processing; destroying cocaine labs; and dismantling the drug-runner groups. This effort will also target drug transit areas in the Caribbean ... .

So, as one can see, there are defined objectives in fighting the drug war but such initiatives will take time, money, and international cooperation to achieve. The "fog of war" also exists in that the myriad of objectives do not lead to a strategic objective that is attainable through the national military strategy. "The strategic military objective of a nation at 'war' must be to apply whatever degree of force is necessary to attain the political purpose for which the 'war' is being fought. ... Strategic, operational, and tactical objectives cannot be clearly identified and developed, however, until the political purpose has been determined and defined by the President and Congress".<sup>21</sup>

### OFFENSIVE

"The principle of offensive suggests that offensive action, or maintenance of the initiative, is the most effective and decisive way to pursue and to attain a clearly defined common goal. This is

fundamentally true in the strategic, the operational, and the tactical senses. An offensive spirit ... is the means by which the nation or a military force captures and holds the initiative, maintains freedom of action and achieves results. It permits the political leader or the military commander to capitalize on the initiative, impose his will on the enemy, set the terms and select the place of confrontation or battle, exploit vulnerabilities and react to rapidly changing situations and unexpected developments. No matter what the level, the side that retains the initiative through offensive action forces the foe to react rather than to act".<sup>22</sup>

This has been proven over and over again in Colombia where the drug cartels have used terrorism to keep the government on the defensive, thus giving them the initiative in carrying out their narcotrafficking. The narcotraffickers cooperating with and financially supporting the Shining Path in Peru have similarly retained the initiative. The suppliers, dealers and pushers in New York to Los Angeles have done the same to keep the police in the reactionary instead of actionary mode.

Since the drug war is extremely subjective and our efforts are intertwined among numerous agencies, it is difficult to seize, retain, or especially exploit the initiative. Whether on the local level, where a major drug bust takes place, to the military/law enforcement (Coast Guard) level of interdiction on the high-seas, to the national level with major international programs, the "one-time" success is hard to capitalize on. Some examples include:

- At the local level - there was a major bust in Los Angeles, CA in 1990 that confiscated twenty-five tons of cocaine, yet within a week after the bust, there was no distinguishable difference in the "street price" of the local drug market.
- At the military/Coast Guard level - in 1991, I was involved in the capture of a sailboat in the Caribbean which was carrying 5000 kilos of cocaine and even though it was a major bust on the high-seas, the sailboats and aircraft just kept coming.
- At the national level - the fact that the drug war does not appear to be producing tangible "political" results, the programs implemented are often stopped or dramatically reduced in funding, often before they have the opportunity to succeed or fail on their own merit. The programs funded by former President Bush as the results of the Cartagena and San Antonio drug summits were hailed as a step forward by all the presidents of the Andean nations. It was considered to be the initiative taken by all.



"Congress and the Clinton Administration are quietly reversing a Bush Administration anti-drug initiative that sent hundreds of millions of dollars to South American governments.

In January (1993), Democrats in Congress slashed military and economic assistance for Peru, Colombia and Bolivia after concluding that the program was failing to produce the desired effect: encouraging the South American nations to reduce production of drugs, principally coca leaf and its refined product cocaine.

Now the White House is preparing to go further as part of an extensive classified review of Government programs aimed at stopping drug shipments before they enter the United States. The expected additional cutbacks would represent a substantial step away from the Bush strategy, introduced in 1989, which focused on halting cocaine trafficking at its source".<sup>23</sup>

Remember earlier when we discussed objectives and we saw how they differed between the Andean nations and the United States? It appears that the new administration is set on imposing our objectives on the Andean nations instead of focusing on attaining mutual objectives. Without preparation and explanation, the reductions will naturally be taken in Latin America as meaning the United States is packing up its drug war abroad. It most certainly stunned those Latin American officials who risked their careers and lives in the belief that the U.S. would be a lasting partner in the drug offensive Washington had so long urged on them. This action not only takes away any initiative, it takes away the offensive and puts us back on the defense waiting for the narcotraffickers next move.

- At the international level - as if the present administration's decision to cut aid was not enough "[T]he Colombian Government's campaign against drug traffickers has suffered a setback after a high court declared that the chief prosecutor's policy of promising reduced sentences to informers with criminal records was unconstitutional.

There was no official reaction to the decision on Monday (3 May 1993), although justice authorities said they would abide by it. Senate President Tito Rueda said Congress would be willing to work with President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo to 'work around the vacuum left by the ruling'.

With the decision, the authorities have been deprived of a key tool in their fight against the Medellin cartel leader, Pablo Escobar, and other criminal organizations. Deputy chief prosecutor Francisco Sintura admitted as much early today.

President Gaviria had adopted the system of pardons for informers after he declared a state of emergency last November. Since then, security forces and Government officials agree, informers have been the single most effective weapon against Mr. Escobar's organization".<sup>24</sup>

Once again the initiative has been taken away, forcing the government to assume a wait-and-see defensive position.

The magnitude of the drug trade is so extensive that to seize the initiative is extremely difficult and, therefore, all the more serious when one loses it. What can we do to regain the initiative and go back on the offensive? The cohesive use of a major public relations program that is fed information from all of the organizations/agencies to help provide a measure of effectiveness would enable them to be in a position to better inform Congress and the public taxpayers on the battles won (however small). This may help immensely in controlling mid-stream political changes in counternarcotic programs. Not only are these changes expensive both financially and politically, they are also counter productive in maintaining our country's integrity and credibility as noted by the programs cut by the Clinton Administration. Those programs and their funding were U.S. promises signed by former President Bush at the two drug summits.

### MASS

"The principle of mass suggests that the nation should commit, or be prepared to commit, a predominance of national power to those regions or areas of the world where the threat to vital security interests is greatest".<sup>25</sup> In the operational and tactical dimensions, this principle suggests that superior combat power must be concentrated at the decisive place and time in order to achieve decisive results.<sup>26</sup> It is obvious that in the present political scenario, we are not about to mass troops throughout the Andean Ridge nor in Cali or Medellin, Colombia. And I for one don't believe we should. In the context of mass, though, let's look at all the players involved, not just military.

Mass, then, includes the peasants growing the coca leaf, the law enforcement agencies of all the nations concerned, the militaries involved, the agencies of all the governments and ultimately the national presidents. So once we commit the power involved from the peasants to the presidents, the massing of forces, together with the proper application of other principles of war, should provide a catalytic movement that would sweep over the supply and demand aspects of the drug war with prodigious results.

Granted, in a purely military context, mass refers to the principle to concentrate combat power at the decisive place and time; but I submit that in the drug war there are continuous decisive places and times due to the fact that the efforts to market the drugs is an ongoing process.

With the efforts of all the fine people and agencies involved in the drug war, why aren't we winning big time? With the hundreds of thousands of individuals involved directly and the millions of family members throughout the world indirectly involved in protection of their families from drugs or helping to get them off drugs, it is difficult to see how we could not be doing better - you will note, I didn't say "losing".

The problem with the concentration of forces at the decisive place and time is that those involved need to be able to coordinate so there is a concentration at the right place and right time. This lack of coordination often leads back to the principle of the objective. The forces are available but because their objectives are not the same, it is impossible to concentrate them for the important knock-out punch.

As an example, in the Caribbean the military forces are trying to interdict the flow of narcotics to the United States through the interdiction of air and maritime assets employed by the drug lords. This interdiction includes stopping vessels on the high-seas and monitoring air assets to touchdown while providing advanced notice to applicable authorities to meet the aircraft. The DEA, on the other hand, often conducts clandestine operations throughout the Caribbean and within host nations consisting of "sting" operations and controlled buys that were often interrupted by the military/Coast Guard in the performance of their duties. The Customs Service, in the meantime, was not concerned with interdiction and arrests on the high-seas. They wanted to follow the narcotics to their entry point in the U.S. in order to arrest those receiving the narcotics. Then there are cases of the FBI in the performance of their duties arresting the drug traffickers before the drugs were able to be delivered. Now comes the DEA again, who doesn't want the traffickers or the people to whom they are delivering to be arrested because they want to follow the drugs to the distributors in order to arrest the "pushers". Throw into the equation the

multitude of Justice Department and law enforcement agencies that are involved in the normal transportation of drugs and it becomes almost Keystone copsical to say "concentrate the forces at the decisive place and time".

For the local levels, each State, County, City and Town has its own counternarcotics program and as has been documented, the punishments doled out in the various areas for the same crime (drug related) is not often consistent. There is probably no one organization that can concentrate these forces and possibly there doesn't need to be a reason to, but the problems noted earlier exist even at the local level.

At the military level, the Department of Defense is the acknowledged leader, yet the lack of coordination between JCS, DoD, CINCLANT, SOUTHCOM, JTFs 4, 5, and 6 and the troops in the field is at times frustrating and causes the question "who is in charge?" In the interdiction effort, CINCLANT is in charge of the waters in the Caribbean and also along the west coast of South America. This also includes some air assets that may belong to CINCLANT until they overfly the South American continent, then they work for SOUTHCOM who is in charge of any counternarcotics efforts that take place on land in Central or South America but even then he may need the approval of the U.S. Ambassador in the various countries in order to carry out his mission. The Joint Task Forces are employed to carry out the operational taskings. Even though this does sound a little confusing, now throw in assets being employed by JCS in coordination with the Justice Department which are operating in the same area (OPERATION SUPPORT JUSTICE) as other DoD assets, who do not know they are there or if they do know, are not privileged to their collection information, which could be vital to the DoD mission. This is compounded when land assets have information about the movement of narcotics that is never passed to the maritime or air assets in the Caribbean to assist them in performing their mission.

Perhaps we need a new C3 here; Coordinate, Communicate then Concentrate forces at the decisive place and time. Of all the organizations involved, one would think that "massing the troops"

would be the easiest for the military but as has been seen, this has not always been the case. I'm not alluding to the fact that the military is not doing a good job - I'm simply stating that at times they give the appearance of doing their job in spite of themselves.

The real internecine arena is the national level. This is because many of the organizations involved are dependent on the funding they receive for their counternarcotics efforts, thus making coordination competitive often times, something not conducive to concentration of forces.

The total numbers of federal organizations involved in the counternarcotics efforts (including the military) could be as few as 37 and as many as 154. Add the State Governors using the National Guard under their command in certain circumstances and the possibility of concentration of forces at the decisive place and time seems remote.

In the international arena, the difficulties are enormous as shown by just the differences in the five organizations involved in Peru. Add to the confusion, the coordination with the Embassy and the Ambassador's Country team, the Mobile Training Teams (MTTs), DEA agents and other internal and international agencies and the drug war problem continues to be exacerbated.

### ECONOMY OF FORCE

As a reciprocal of the principle of mass, economy of force in the strategic dimensions suggests that, in the absence of unlimited resources, a nation may have to accept some risks in areas where vital national interests are not immediately at stake. This means that, if the nation must focus predominant power toward a clearly defined primary threat (Iraq in Desert Storm), it cannot allow attainment of that objective to be compromised by necessary diversions to areas of lower priority.<sup>27</sup> As we saw in Desert Storm, the "principles of war" were correctly applied with overwhelming success. In the case of the drug war, those same efforts need to be appraised. I don't mean C5 aircraft loads of troops, equipment and supplies but the efforts involved in getting everything to Saudi Arabia. With the diminishing, if not the

end, of the Cold War and the possibilities of a global nuclear war hopefully in our past, it is time to refocus our vital national interests.

Certainly there is major unrest in the world and our involvement at the lower end of the conflict spectrum in Somalia and at the present in Bosnia-Herzegovina are considered vital national interests for humanitarian relief reasons but they don't add to 10,000 American deaths per year or the birth of 300,000 drug dependent babies. The premise of economy of force is to allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts. If the drug war is a secondary effort, not a vital interest, then it implies the acceptance of prudent risks in the drug war in order to achieve superiority in the areas of national vital interests. We need to put the emphasis back into the drug war, if it is a vital national interest, and I think it is, and use the economy of force principle for the other interest areas. To do this requires astute strategic planning and judgement by political and military leaders, and again places a premium on the need for flexibility of thought and action. This applies not only from the White House but throughout all of the participating agencies. In other words, don't give the drug war "lip service", give it life in order to save American lives.

### MANEUVER

Maneuver, in the strategic sense, has three unrelated dimensions: flexibility, mobility, and maneuverability. The first of these involves the need for flexibility in thought, plans and operations. Such flexibility enhances the ability to react rapidly to unforeseen circumstances. Given the global nature and the dynamic character of the drug war, such flexibility is crucial. The second dimension involves strategic mobility, which is especially critical for an insular power such as the United States and its various agencies. In order to react promptly and to concentrate the forces at the decisive place this element is essential. The final strategic dimension involves maneuverability within the theater of operations so as to focus maximum strength against the enemy's weakest point and thereby gain the

strategic advantage.<sup>28</sup>

In my force planning paper for the National Security Decision Making Department, I likened the nuclear triad to a drug war triad where the legs of the triad were composed of the Latin American Programs and Efforts, the Interdiction Efforts and the U.S. criminal justice system/education system/drug rehabilitation programs.<sup>29</sup> When the strategic bombers are replaced by the Latin American countries' efforts at coca crop eradication/crop substitution, law enforcement/military disruption of narcotrafficking and maximum utilization of the judicial systems; the missiles are replaced by the interdiction efforts, including law enforcement and applicable agencies within the United States; and the ballistic submarines are replaced by the U.S. criminal justice system/educational system/drug rehabilitation programs the results hopefully will be as fruitful as the nuclear triad. The problem is that everyone is congratulating themselves on winning the Cold War but often forget that the efforts were costly both financially and politically and took over 40 years to win. But, just as the Cold War enemies did not know which arm of the nuclear triad would strike, using the principle of maneuver, the narcotraffickers likewise could be kept offguard. The object of maneuver is to concentrate or to disperse forces in a manner designed to place the enemy at a disadvantage, thus achieving results that otherwise would be more costly in men and material.<sup>30</sup> The strategic objective would be to have the three arms in balance so as to gain control of both the supply and demand sectors but, in reality, as we become successful with host nation programs, the narcotraffickers increase efforts elsewhere, hence the need to maneuver.

#### UNITY OF COMMAND

Unity of Command ensures that all efforts are focused on a common goal. At the strategic level, this common goal equates to the political purpose of the United States and the broad strategic objectives which we place toward the drug war. At the national level, the Constitution provides the unity of command by appointing the President as the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.<sup>32</sup> This places

the military as well as all of the federal agencies under the command of the President.

But to add to the problem of unity of command, there are a myriad of agencies involved which were discussed earlier in detail. Along with the Department of Defense there are numerous civilian organizations that are involved in meeting the objectives of the National Security Strategy and the National Drug Control Strategy. The civilian interdiction forces employed in the National Drug Control Program (NDCP) are drawn, in part, from the normal law enforcement agencies (LEAs) many of which we covered in some detail. Also included in the federal civilian organizations are such organizations as the Departments of State, Commerce, and Interior, whose principal responsibilities are mostly outside law enforcement or drug control. As stated, depending on how they are counted, the total numbers of federal organizations involved in the NDCP (including the military) could be as few as 37 and as many as 154.<sup>33</sup> For the purposes of this paper, either number is large enough to suggest that the effort is widespread and includes a variety of law enforcement and other agencies throughout the United States, from the local to the federal levels, each with their own command structure.

The quest for an organizational structure that can efficiently and effectively meet the challenge of narcotrafficking is not new. In the past 25 years alone, there have been at least 16 attempts to reorganize Federal drug control programs. Theoretically speaking, what is needed is a single organization, properly manned and funded, that operates under one leader who has directive authority to control all counternarcotics programming, planning, and tactical efforts, both domestically and overseas. That will not happen.<sup>34</sup>

Complaints of "no one's in charge" are pointless. In our system of government, no one but the President can really be in overall control of the drug war at the national level. Only he can be the true "drug czar" for only someone above the Cabinet level has sufficient authority to control the departments and agencies which are responsible for the various counternarcotics forces.<sup>35</sup>

The President has raised the position as director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy



(ONDCP), recently assumed by Mr. Lee P. Brown, to a Cabinet level but he has failed to outline what powers the "drug czar" will have. While the ONDCP can develop and administer strategy and policy guidance and Director Brown will have more clout as a Cabinet member, the President must still play an active, continuous role in directing the interagency counternarcotics efforts. Further, only by his direct participation can we hope to pull together and fully integrate our national and international efforts.

With the international aspects of the drug war, what about a coalition effort with some organization such as the United Nations in charge? The U.N. is, in fact, involved in counterdrug operations but in international operations the designated lead agency is more complicated. For the U.S., international law, treaty agreements, U.S. foreign policy objectives, security considerations, military-to-military relationships, the role of an American Ambassador and his country team, and the internal social and political environment of the foreign nations concerned are all piled upon and intertwined in the counternarcotics efforts that unity of effort becomes the objective since unity of command under one individual or organization seems difficult at best.

### SECURITY

Security enhances freedom of action by reducing friendly vulnerabilities to hostile acts, influence or surprise. The myriad of problems with security in the drug war are diverse. On one side there is the problem of "need-to-know" security that often leaves the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing and becomes extremely counterproductive. On the other side is the complete lack of security caused by corruption. Corruption most commonly involves individuals who accept money simply to look the other way or conveniently disappear during a drug transaction. The motivation is not complicated. In November 1989 Congressional testimony, retired Special Forces Commander General Robert Kingston described a conversation between a U.S. border patrol agent and a Peruvian official at a checkpoint in Peru:

A Colonel from Lima said, I have the opportunity while I'm here to make \$70,000 by looking the other way at certain times. You have a family, they are protected in the United States, you have a proper pension plan. My family is not protected and I don't have the proper pension plan and I will never have the opportunity to make \$70,000 as long as I live. I am going to make it.

A senior officer in Peru earns about \$240 a month. It should therefore be no surprise that officers now bribe their superiors to get assigned to coca-producing zones once avoided at all costs.<sup>36</sup> This type of corruption is not limited to the Andean countries. It has been discovered within the U.S. judicial system, law enforcement agencies, Customs Service, Coast Guard and just about any other organization involved in the drug war.

Security may be achieved through the establishment and maintenance of protective measures against hostile acts or influence; or it may be assured by deception operations designed to confuse and dissipate enemy attempts to interfere with the force being secured.<sup>37</sup> In both cases, the intent is to prevent the possibility of corruption while protecting the operations but, in reality, this is often a very fine line. Risk is an inherent condition in war, as we have seen throughout this paper; application of the principle of security does not suggest overcautiousness or the avoidance of calculated risk. The security of the forces involved as well as the secrecy of the operations have been major concerns since the beginning of the drug war. The main intent is to never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage.

### SURPRISE

To a larger degree, the principle of surprise is the reciprocal of the principle of security. Concealing ones own capabilities and intentions creates the opportunity to strike the enemy unaware or unprepared. However, strategic surprise is difficult to achieve.<sup>38</sup> Rapid advances in strategic surveillance technology make it increasingly more difficult to mask or to cloak the large scale operations and to some extent even the smaller ones. With the almost unlimited financial funds of the narcotraffickers, access to modern equipment is not a problem. This problem is compounded in an open

society such as the United States, where freedom of press and information are highly valued.

Using the example of the drug triad, it is possible to employ this principle by striking at all three legs of the triad at the same time and when the drug lords react, go for their center of gravity instead of capitalizing on their weaknesses as expected. Karl Von Clausewitz defined the center of gravity as "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends".<sup>39</sup> Its attack is - or should be the focus of all operations.

Surprise is important at the operational and tactical levels for it can decisively affect the outcome of battles. With surprise, success out of proportion to the effort expended may be obtained. Surprise results from going against an enemy (narcotraffickers) at a time and/or place or in a manner for which he is unprepared.<sup>40</sup> Surprise is often combined with the principles of offensive, mass and maneuver. Factors contributing to surprise include speed and alacrity, employment of unexpected factors, effective intelligence, deception operations of all kinds, variations of tactics and methods of operation, and operation security.<sup>41</sup> The problem with surprise though is that its element is sometimes compromised, often through corruption, which makes striking the enemy at a time or place, or in a manner, for which he is unprepared extremely difficult.

### SIMPLICITY

In the strategic, operational, and tactical dimensions, guidance, plans and orders should be as simple and direct as the attainment of the objective will allow. The strategic importance of the principle of simplicity goes well beyond its more traditional military application. It is an important element in the development and enhancement of public support.<sup>42</sup> If the American people are to commit their lives and resources to the drug war, they must understand the purpose which is to be achieved (in this case the stabilization of the drug problem in order to eventually get it under control). Political and military objectives and operations must therefore be presented in clear, concise, understandable terms: simple and

direct plans and orders cannot compensate for ambiguous and cloudy objectives, as discussed earlier. Direct, simple plans and clear concise orders are essential to reduce the chances for misunderstanding and confusion. We certainly have seen enough elements of confusion in other principles. Other factors being equal, a simple plan executed promptly is to be preferred over a complex plan executed later. Sounds simple enough, but as I have attempted to show in each of the principles, there are inherent problems which make carrying out this principle anything but simple. While each agency involved may very well follow this principle, the lack of coordination between them often causes confusions or conflicts in trying to carry out their objectives. Without a synergism among the other warfighters - keeping things simple will not accomplish the mission.

## CHAPTER III

### CONCLUSIONS

The drug war is winnable but the United States is not yet winning. We define winning the war as reducing the amount of drug abuse and drug traffic to a level which is acceptable to U.S. society and which does not seriously degrade our national security, our economic well-being, and our social order.<sup>43</sup> In other words, controlling the drug trade to the point it no longer poses a clear and present danger to the national security of the United States.

If we are not winning at the present time, what are the problems? The problems created by drug abuse and drug trafficking are enormous. American social structures and moral standards are being degraded and the economic drain is staggering. Drug-related problems have impaired our relationships with foreign governments and our national security programs have been jeopardized. In the long run, America's drug war is more critical for its vital national interests than regional conflicts in places like Southwest Asia, Africa, [Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina], and possibly even the governments of the countries of the former Soviet Union since they are showing a capability to cause harm but no intent. A \$200 billion yearly drain on the U.S. economy from drug trafficking and abuse far exceeds [the] estimates of the dollar cost for conducting Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf.<sup>44</sup>

The drug war is costly and as mentioned, shall continue to be as long as we are not winning. Drug trafficking will end only when it is no longer profitable to continue. Either the numbers of individuals wanting drugs must fall to an insignificant level or the costs of doing business must become unbearably high. A combination of these would be the ideal. Such business costs are measured in terms of whatever the trafficker holds dear - his fortune, his freedom, or his life.<sup>45</sup>

Seriously implementing the "principles of war" against the requirements needed to make supply and demand reductions should greatly impact on the narcotrafficker's fortune, freedom and life.

Remember that in establishing a national objective, the desired objectives of all concerned often do not match which makes the impact on the narcotrafficker not as decisive. In Peru for example, Peruvian politicians, according to a 1989 DEA internal review, have said that:

Peru can live with the narcotics problem for the next 50 years; if the economic and insurgent problems are not dealt with now. ... The will to deal with the drug issues, when faced with problems that threaten the immediate survival of the country, remains the most difficult issue.<sup>46</sup>

Since that review, the President of Peru has had to stage an auto-coup in order to stabilize his government against the combined insurgent and narcotrafficker activities. The objectives of the various U.S. agencies have also proven to be counterproductive due to budget and turf battles. Drug law enforcement officers, U.S. military men and women, and the Washington bureaucracy (to include the Congress) all speak different professional languages. Ways must be found to improve communications. ONDCP should lead an interagency effort to publish a doctrinal concept for drug interdiction activities, to include a dictionary of common terms. Possibly, if we all speak the same language, drug war not English, we can then decide on a main, achievable objective and put all of our resources towards it success.

In regards to the offensive, the stakes in this war are high. Thousands of dedicated people work long hours, often in dangerous situations, attempting to stem the flow of drugs. They deserve more and better support than they now receive, particularly in terms of personnel researching, current technology and interagency coordination if we ever expect them to take and maintain the offensive. At the tactical level, interagency cooperation and joint operations are quite feasible if an atmosphere of understanding and trust can be established. This has often been accomplished by continuous liaison, frequent planning conferences, and working together in joint operations. The challenge is to achieve similar harmony at the operational and strategic levels. When fighting a foe that is cunning, ruthless, and well-financed, to win we need a force that works well together, is of sufficient size and is better trained and at least equally well-equipped. That force should use the best methods known to plan and control battles. If we can have no-fly zones in Iraq and Bosnia, why can't we have the same in the Caribbean during 2000-0600 each

night? The commercial aircraft on designated flight routes, squawking the appropriate codes would not be subject to intercept, all others would be requested to land at the nearest airfield to be searched and shot down if they failed to comply or went evasive. It is time to change the rules of engagement (ROE) and truly go on the offensive.

When we discuss the principle of mass, we mean more than battalions, divisions, aircraft carriers, and bomber wings. Mass also includes individuals, like the Peruvian peasant, the Colombian judge, the U.S. doctor, and the Newport third grade teacher, as well as organizations like DoD, DEA, Customs and the Coast Guard. Working toward the concentration of their "power" at the decisive place and time is the objective. We need to keep winning the battles in the Andean nations, on the high-seas, in the ghettos of New York, Los Angeles and Washington, eventually the battles won will combine to help us win the war.

The hardest problem presently encountered in the drug war is the question of "who is in charge"? We need to enforce our national drug policy and in order to do that we need a policy director. The "drug czar" was designated to be that person but the position has been ineffective in the past. Hopefully, with Director Brown being a Cabinet member, things will change. Until the President realizes that under all aspects of the drug war, he is the one in charge, change will be slow in coming. In the interim, the "drug czar" should be tasked to provide liaison with, and direct, the appropriate State, Justice, Commerce, and Treasury department sections as well as DEA. The position should also have some jurisdiction over an enhanced military role in fighting drugs.

The key points of U.S. drug policy should be based on both domestic demand and external supply. The supply-side approach of crop eradication, high-seas interdiction will never stem the tide, nor will simple, one-dimensional educational programs and police enforcement. What is required is a menu of flexible and realistic options. Part of the realism is an acknowledgement that there will never be a total victory in drug-use eradication: someone will always be a user.

As for the military, people need to keep in mind that even after the United States entered World War II, it was two full years before the tide of the war began to turn. At that time, all the men and women, material and money this country could summon were put towards the war effort. In comparison, the drug war's budget is minuscule and the nation is not focused on a common objective. It is also important to note that since being assigned the lead role in air and maritime interdiction efforts in 1989, the military has been involved in Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, evacuation of American citizens in Liberia and Somalia, disaster relief in the Philippines and the United States, humanitarian assistance in Somalia, Iraq (Provide Comfort) and Bosnia with the possibility of escalating assistance to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

So, with a coordinated national objective, the masses working in unison under one leader and espousing the principles of war can we be successful? The answer is a definite yes!

President Bush in his address to the San Antonio drug summit in March 1992 said "...the situation has markedly improved. Top traffickers are dead or jailed, record levels of cocaine and other drugs have been seized; cultivation has leveled off; interdiction is up worldwide; ... consumption is declining as our people increasingly reject drugs, especially our youth; our judicial institutions are stronger ... and our efforts against money-laundering and chemical diversion are improving."<sup>47</sup>

That was last year, are we still continuing the fight? Professor Peter A. Lupsha of the Political Science department at the University of New Mexico wrote in a letter to the editor of the New York Times on 3 May 1993, "Mr. Clinton's Invisible Drug Policy" (editorial, April 22) fails to capture the fundamentals of the drug issue: High school senior's monthly cocaine use is lower today at 1.3 million compared to 1.9 million in 1975. Adult monthly cocaine use, an estimated 1.9 million to 2 million, is lower than 2.5 million in 1977.

Heavy weekly cocaine use, at an estimated 654,000 is about where it was in the mid-1970's. Urine analysis on male arrestees also shows cocaine use down, and among younger males it is



significantly lower than the mid-1980's. The crisis is over; demand-side use of cocaine has stabilized.

On the supply side, we have also made significant progress since the mid-1980's. The exit price of a kilo of cocaine in Colombia is still low, ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000. This is 150 percent higher than it was in 1990 when the average price was \$1,200. Coca leaf production in the Andean ridge since 1990 has been surprising stable. Seizures by law enforcement have, however, risen from 10 percent in 1985 to more than 33 percent today.

Moreover, the Latin American Countries themselves have made considerable progress and now invest millions of their own money into the counterdrug effort. They have also greatly increased mutual cooperation and coordination, at all levels, both with each other and the United States.

The question for the Clinton Administration is not some simple shift from our growing supply-side success to a demand-side battle that has been mostly won. It is a need for adequate and continued financing for education and treatment within a context that recognizes our Latin American neighbors are fighting to maintain fragile democracies amid the severely de-stabilizing forces of international organized crime and insurgent groups that are increasingly turning to drug protection for financing.

Treatment works only when the patient wants help. Our Latin neighbors and markets are showing political will against great odds. They deserve our continued support.<sup>48</sup>

Professor Lupsha was responding to an article I discussed earlier about the Clinton Administration's cuts in funding to the Andean nations and shifting the emphasis to the domestic programs. As you have surely noticed, I am in complete agreement with Professor Lupsha.

Karl Von Clausewitz said "...that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse carried on with other means. ... The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose."<sup>49</sup> I see this as saying that the national military strategy is the means to carry out the political objectives of the national security strategy and the drug war is the means of reaching the political goals

of the national drug control strategy.

It is indeed an "unprincipled war" but as was stated by President Bush and Professor Lupsha, the war is not being lost, we are just not decisively winning. By applying the time-tested, proven "principles of war" to each leg of the drug triad, I submit that the resultant factors will not only give us a very principled war but also a very winnable one. The principles have merit and make sense. The problem is not the concept but the multitude of possible problems in the implementation. As I stated in the introduction, "Rome was not built in a day" and the drug war will not be won tomorrow or the next day. However, with the proper application of the "principles of war" in meeting the national objectives, I believe that success in fighting the drug war is achievable. The "principled" war against drugs has all the potential for success that the "principled" World War II and Operation Desert Storm accomplished. Since the counternarcotics efforts are, in fact, a "drug war", it is foolish to not use all of the tools available in fighting it.

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